

Orange and Union Streets Neighborhood Study  
Solomon Gardner and Paul Gardner Houses  
1 & 3 Stone Alley  
Nantucket  
Nantucket County  
Massachusetts

HABS No. MASS-1076

HABS  
MASS  
10-NANT  
76Y-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior

ORANGE AND UNION STREETS NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY  
SOLOMON GARDNER & PAUL GARDNER HOUSESHABS  
MASS  
10-NANT  
76Y-

Location: 1 and 3 Stone Alley (on north side, formerly called Gunter's Alley, running between Orange and Union Streets), Nantucket, Massachusetts. These two houses abutt.  
No. 1 (on east side) known as Solomon Gardner House.  
No. 3 (on west side) known as Paul Gardner House.

Present Owners: Miss Clara Parker and Miss Ida Parker

Present Occupants: The Misses Parker and Leasees

Present Use: Residence

Brief Statement of Significance: First half of the eighteenth century abutting houses were built on historic alley at edge of Quianaty Bank; part of the Orange and Union Streets Neighborhood Study (MASS-1014).

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

## 1. Original and subsequent owners:

## No. 1 (house on east side)

- 1720 -- Solomon Gardner owned (and probably had built) this half of house.
- 1753 -- Solomon Gardner, Jr. and Paul Gardner by deed from their father, "my dwelling house in part and part alike unto each other". (This deed was not recorded until 1759.)
- 1764 --- Solomon Gardner, Jr. bought the half owned by his brother Paul Gardner, block-maker, for 23 pounds "lawfull money of the Province". Ownership then passed from Solomon Gardner Jr. to another brother Stephen, and from him to his son, Stephen Gardner Jr.
- 1774 -- Samuel Barrett bought from Stephen Gardner, Jr. for 100 pounds "the dwelling-house in Sherburne aforesaid in which Samuel Barrett now lives, being the estate of my father, Stephen Gardner."
- 1805 -- John Narboth, cooper, bought from Samuel Barrett, silversmith, for \$1600 the whole double house.
- 1819 -- William Coffin from John Narboth.
- 1819 -- Christopher Mitchell from William Coffin for \$1100 "dwelling-house now occupied by John Barrett and adjoining house occupied by Thomas Smith on the west".

- 1832 -- John W. Barrett bought from Christopher Mitchell the east part only.
- 1832 -- Gorham Coffin from John W. Barrett for \$1500.
- 1847 -- Stephen Easton from Gorham Coffin for \$800.
- 1899 -- Hattie E. Andrews by deed from Thomas A. Easton and James J. Easton who inherited under will of their father, Stephen Easton.
- 1946 -- Clara Parker, Ida Parker and Elizabeth H. Andrews inherited from Harriet E. Andrews Parker.
- 1969 to date -- Clara Parker and Ida Parker.  
(Abstract: Records at Registry of Deeds, Nantucket, Massachusetts.)

No. 3 (house on west side)

- 1753 -- House was built a short time prior to 1753, probably by Solomon Gardner.
- 1753 -- Solomon Gardner Jr. and Paul Gardner by deed from their father, "my dwelling-house in part and part alike unto each other". It is reported that Solomon Jr. and Paul owned and occupied these two houses in 1753, Paul in the west half and Solomon Jr. in the east part.
- 1764 -- Solomon Gardner Jr. bought the half owned by his brother Paul Gardner, block-maker, for 23 pounds "lawfull money of the Province". Ownership then passed from Solomon Gardner Jr. to another brother Stephen, and from him to his son, Stephen Gardner Jr.
- 1774 -- Samuel Barrett bought from Stephen Gardner Jr. for 100 pounds "the dwelling-house in Sherburne aforesaid in which Samuel Barrett now lives, being the estate of my father, Stephen Gardner".
- 1805 -- John Narboth, cooper, bought this part of the double house together with the east part.
- 1808 -- Thomas Smith bought west part from John Narboth.
- 1836 -- William M. Andrews, housewright, bought from Thomas Smith the "upper part of my dwelling-house" for \$300.
- 1837 -- Clarinda Swain bought from William M. Andrews and Thomas Smith the whole west house.
- 1852 -- Rebecca E. Andrews from Estate of Clarinda Swain.
- 1853 -- George L. Marvin bought from Rebecca E. Andrews.
- 1877 -- Azubah G. Coffin bought from Estate of George L. Marvin.
- 1883 -- Elizabeth A. Ellis bought from Azubah G. Coffin, widow.
- 1901 -- Avis Enas bought from Elizabeth A. Ellis Ford.
- 1906 -- Sarah S. Folger bought from Avis Enas, widow.
- 1910 -- Harriet E. Parker from Sarah S. Folger, widow.
- 1946 -- Clara Parker, Ida Parker and Elizabeth H. Andrews inherited from Harriet E. Parker.
- 1969 to date -- Clara Parker and Ida Parker.  
(Abstract: Records Registry Deeds, Nantucket, Massachusetts,)

2. Date of erection: No. 1, east part, before 1720 and No. 3, west part, probably about thirty years later.

Solomon Gardner owned a tract of land in this vicinity on which were built houses for several of his sons. Records are not explicit enough to determine exact date each was built and in some cases torn down. It is however on record that Solomon Gardner owned this east house in 1720 and the west part in 1753.

3. Architect: None.
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: Both houses are two stories, with gable roofs and shingles. Their front entrances and porches are on the south. It is possible that the entrance to the east house may have originally been on the west side.

There is an ell on north side of east house with woodshed to the west.

The house on the east was built some years before the west house which abutts it.

5. Notes on alterations and additions: Although both houses face south, they are now for convenience entered by Gardner's Court on the north. The entrance hall of the west house has been converted into a closet.

Many changes have naturally been made through two hundred and fifty years.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

Houses were built facing Gunter's Alley (now Stone Alley) on the south, with Cat Alley on the east and Gardner's Court on the north side, in section known as Quaaty Hill in Fish Lot Share No. 4.

Solomon Gardner, son of Captain Richard and Mary Gardner, was born July 1, 1680. He was a mariner when a young man and later in life was a yeoman. He owned a tract of land on the hill between Main Street, Orange Street and Stone Alley. He died in 1760 at age 80 years. Of his ten children, four of his sons owned houses on this land and Stephen, a blacksmith, also owned a "mansion house" at the west corner of Main and Orange Streets. He moved his family to New Garden, North Carolina in 1772

Another son, Solomon Jr., was Captain of a Brig which was lost with the whole crew, thirteen men in all, on a whaling voyage to the Grand Banks in 1764.

Son David was a tanner by trade; his tannery was on the west side of Union Street near Stone Alley.

The other son, Paul, was a block-maker. All of the brothers appear to have been good, solid citizens.

In 1774 Samuel Barrett bought this property. He is called a "silversmith" in the deed and it will be noted that an item in Francis Hill Bigelow's Historical Silver of the Colonies and Its Makers reads as follows: "A spoon made about 1760 by S. Barrett of Nantucket; a double drop is on the back of the bowl. It is engraved Solomon Gardner". Solomon Gardner had owned the house before Samuel Barrett.

A later owner, James Easton, was also a Nantucket silversmith and today silver with the Easton mark is highly prized. In 1853 Mr. Easton was a delegate to the constitutional convention of Massachusetts. He served as a member of the school committee for several years. At the commencement of the Civil War he was elected State Senator from the island district, which then was composed of part of Cape Cod and Duke's County and Nantucket, serving for two terms. He was a native of Providence, Rhode Island, but came to Nantucket as a boy apprentice to William Hadwen, with whom he learned the trade of watchmaker and jeweler. When he died in 1903, the Honorable James Easton, 2nd, was Nantucket's oldest resident.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old Views: Plan of Property, Book of Plans 32, Page 355, Registry of Deeds, Nantucket, Mass.; photograph in 106 Views of Nantucket by John Henry Robinson, Washington D.C.: Judd and Detweiler, 1911; photograph showing Gunter's Alley and west house doorway, Inquirer and Mirror, January 5, 1967.

2. Bibliography:

Interview with Miss Clara Parker by Professor F. Blair Reeves, August 1970.

Prepared by Mrs. Marie M. Coffin  
Nantucket, Massachusetts  
August 1970

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

- A. General Statement: These two houses abutt, the east house built first; two stories, wood frame shingle exterior, gable roof, No. 1 has ell at north side with shed projecting to the east; both houses are entered from Gardner Court due to easy access, even though they are numbered in reference to Stone Alley and have entrances to the south; both structures are in fair condition

B. Description of the Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: 55' - 0" by 73' - 0".

2. Foundation walls: Stone with cement wash.
3. Wall construction: Wood frame, shingle exterior.
4. Stoops and porches: Wood porch at #1, stoop at #3 are early twentieth century construction in bad repair.
5. Chimney: Brick chimney near center of structure, two chimneys in ell.
6. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: Carpenter classic doorways, panel doors. Board and batten doors into cellar.
  - b. Windows: Six-over-six and miscellaneous small windows, board frame.
7. Structure: Post and beam with girts, posts and summer beams exposed at the interior.
8. Roof: Gable parallel to Stone Alley intersects gable from ell of #1, lean-to roof over north side of #1, asphalt shingle covering; wood house (now kitchen and storage) has hip roof. Wood gutters and sheet metal downspouts. Scuttle in north slope next to chimney.

C. Description of the Interior (survey limited to the first floor):

1. Floor plans:
  - a. Basement: Full basement under #1 south portion only.
  - b. First floor:
    - (1) #1. Entry hall from porch at south elevation, stairway to second floor, parlor and glazed "piazza" to the east, diningroom and bedroom in ell, kitchen and storage in former "wood house" to the north, family entrance into kitchen from Gardner Court; secondary stair to second floor and to cellar between parlor and diningroom.
    - (2) #3. Entry hall from stoop now used as closet, access from Gardner Court; parlor, diningroom, kitchen at north; stairway to second floor off kitchen entry; bedrooms and bath on second floor.
2. Stairways: In stairway entry hall #1: L-shaped stair with winders at second floor, turned balusters and newels; other staircases small.
3. Flooring: Miscellaneous wood boards of various widths painted brown and grey, linoleum covering.

4. Walls and ceilings: Plaster with paper, plaster painted, car siding.
5. Doorways and doors: Doors are two and four panels, one side only, five-light overdoors.
6. Decorative features: Wood panel under windows of parlor; doors, wainscot and other diningroom trim grained to simulate oak; cupboard in diningroom.
7. Lighting: Electric. Porcelain knob and tube and modern cable.
8. Heating: Fireplaces in principal spaces; parlor fireplace closed, carpenter classic mantel with tapered pilasters, cornice shelf, entablature decorated with ellipses; fireplace in diningroom is of brick, cooking crane pivots from the reveal; unusual fireplace in entry of #1 accommodates one andiron and log, niches at each side and above; modern oil-fired hot water system with radiators; 1' by 1' grate let into ceiling of diningroom to permit heat to rise to bedroom above, also in living room of #3.

#### SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

These two abutting houses face south on Stone Alley and west of Cat Alley, a trail and public way between Stone Alley and Gardner Court to the north. Wood picket fences, hedges and masonry retaining walls mark property lines. Vegetation, mostly sycamore maple trees, all but obscure the buildings from the east and south, informal paving stone walks.

Prepared by F. Blair Reeves, A.I.A.  
Nantucket, Massachusetts  
July 1970

#### PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were prepared as part of the Orange and Union Streets Neighborhood Study (MASS-1014) made in the summer of 1970 by the Historic American Buildings Survey on Nantucket, Massachusetts. This is the fifth summer project of a continuing HABS comprehensive survey of the early architecture and urban design of Nantucket financed by a grant from the Nantucket Historical Trust.

The project was under the general supervision of James C. Massey, Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey. Project Director was Professor F. Blair Reeves, A.I.A., of the University of Florida. Historical information was provided by Mrs. Marie M. Coffin of Nantucket, Massachusetts. Photographs are by Jack E. Boucher of Linwood, New Jersey. The material was edited for deposit in the Library of Congress by Mrs. Constance Werner Ramirez, August 1971.

Addendum to:

ORANGE & UNION STREETS NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY

(Gardner, Solomon & Paul, House)

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